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A NOTE ON *OENEIS MELISSA* (FABRICIUS)
IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES (SATYRIDAE)¹CLIFFORD D. FERRIS²

College of Engineering, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming 82071

OENEIS MELISSA (FABRICIUS) in the western United States has generally been referred to the subspecies *lucilla* Barnes and McDunnough in recent publications (Callaghan and Tidwell, 1971; Ferris 1971 a, b). The population in the Canadian Rocky Mountains was named *beani* by Elwes in his 1893 revision with Edwards of the worldwide *Oeneis*. The type locality is Laggan (Lake Louise) in Banff National Park, Alberta. The type locality for *lucilla* is Hall Valley, Park Co., Colorado.

Barnes and McDunnough, 1918, separated *lucilla* from the other subspecies of *melissa* on the basis of the following key characters: black palpi fringed with white dorsally, virtually no median (mesial) band on the ventral surface of the hind wings, and the "yellow" aspect of many specimens, especially in the females. Elwes in describing *beani* noted the blackish-brown aspect of the insect and its entirely black palpi.

Recent examination of specimens from the Rocky Mountains in the United States has demonstrated that both subspecies occur in this region. Material taken in Colorado, New Mexico and Utah (Leidy Peak, Uintah Co.) is *lucilla*. In Wyoming, *melissa* is found in the Wind River Range, Sublette Co. and on the Beartooth Plateau in Park Co. Specimens from these localities are the typical black-palpi *beani* found in Alberta. This subspecies has been recorded from Carbon Co. (Beartooth Plateau region), Glacier National Park, Montana and from Okanogan Co., Washington. To date, I have been unable to find any Idaho records.

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²Research Associate, Allyn Museum of Entomology, Sarasota, Florida; Museum Associate, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, Los Angeles, California.

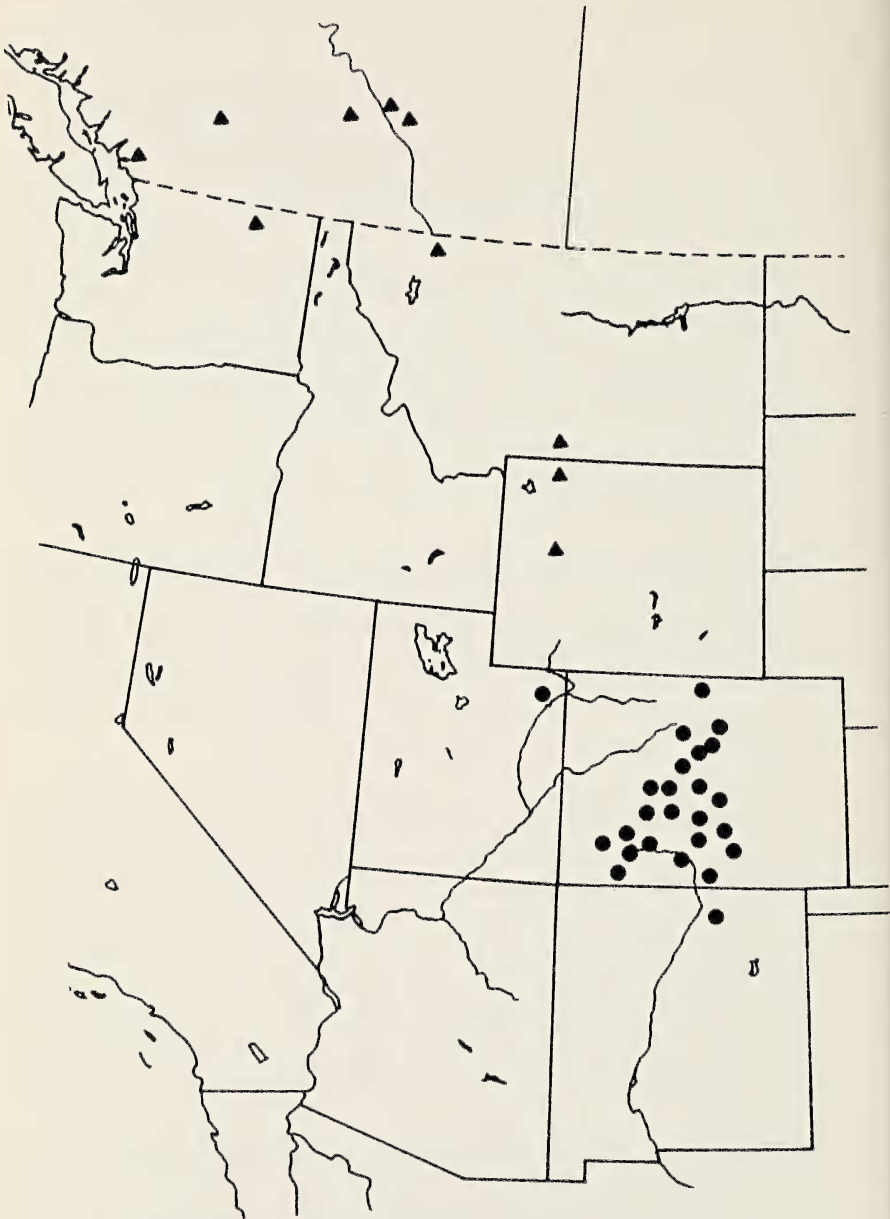


Fig. 1.—Distribution of *Oeneis melissa* in the western United States with partial records for southwestern Canada. Black dots = *lucilla*; black triangles = *beani*.

O. melissa beani frequents wind swept outcroppings of black or black-lichen-covered rocks above treeline. They are swift fliers and very wary. In the Beartooth Range, they occur at 11,000' and some 3000' lower on Plateau Mountain in southern Alberta.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of *melissa* in the United States. The Colorado county records include: Boulder, Chaffee, Clear Creek, Costilla, Custer, Fremont, Gilpin, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Huerfano, Lake, La Plata, Larimer, Ouray, Park, Pitkin, Rio Grande, Saguache, San Juan, San Miguel, Teller. In New Mexico, it is found in Taos Co.

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